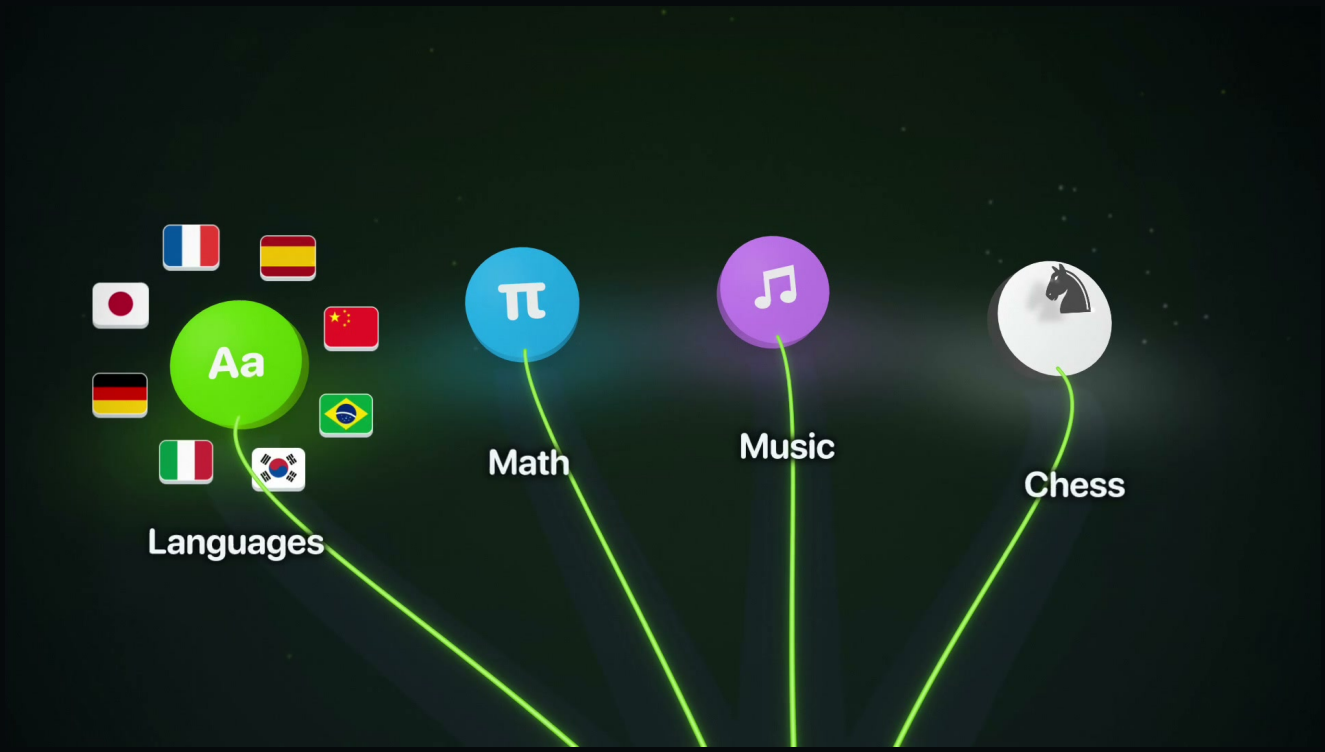
The Path

A Duolingo spec ad, built entirely in code

THE PROMPT · 21 s · 16:9 + 9:16 · 60 fps



Spec ad, not affiliated with Duolingo. Duolingo, the Duolingo logo and Duo are trademarks of Duolingo, Inc.

How to use it

Paste the prompt below into Claude Code (or any coding agent that can run Python) in an empty project folder. Fill in the **[brackets]**. Work in phases and approve each one before the next: brief, assets, voice, engine, first preview, fixes, 9:16, finals. Every frame is rendered by code: no stock footage, no AI video generation.

What you need

- Python 3 with numpy, Pillow and OpenCV, plus ffmpeg. SF Pro Rounded and SF Pro (free from Apple).
- An ElevenLabs account for the voice-over; the official Duolingo wordmark and Duo vector art (public pages).
- An SFX library of your own (whooshes, ticks, clicks, pops, soft impacts) plus the brand's own app sounds.
- Optional: DaVinci Resolve for a layered, editable project at the end.

The prompt

GOAL

Make a spec ad for **Duolingo**, built entirely in code (a Python renderer with numpy / Pillow / OpenCV and a real perspective camera), 19.2 s + a 2 s end card, 60 fps, 16:9 (1920×1080) and a 9:16 re-layout. One continuous camera flight, zero hard cuts. Premium, playful, readable on a phone, a hook that lands in the first second.

IDEA

"The Path." In the app, Duolingo is a path of lessons. Here the path is **one continuous Feather Green line of light that does every job**: it reveals the wordmark, strings chunky 3D lesson nodes through a dark world, fills the lesson's progress bar, curls into the streak flame, lifts your row to #1 of the league, becomes your voice wave on a video call with Duo, splits into four courses (Languages, Math, Music, Chess), underlines the tagline and reveals the logo again as Duo lands. Every feature is a station along the path; the camera flies from one to the next.

LOOK

A near-black stage (#060A0C) with one dim green glow (never neon). Duolingo's visual language made physical: chunky rounded shapes with a darker lip under them (the Duolingo 3D button), Feather Green #58CC02 with #89E219 highlights and #58A700 lips; streak orange #FF9600 / #FFC800, Math blue #1CB0F6, Music purple #CE82FF; the app's dark mode rebuilt by eye (#131F24, #37464F). SF Pro Rounded for every Duolingo string. Depth of field, real motion blur, light grain; text always holds long enough to read.

Beat sheet (seconds, 60 fps)

	Seconds	What happens
S1	0.00–1.67	**Hook.** Duo rushes from depth through green light strands and SLAMS at 0.17 s, BIG (about half the frame): real squash and stretch, wings flung out, shake, shards, sub hit. The camera eases back to the lock-up while the line runs under "duolingo" and reveals it. Duo blinks, then hops out.
S2	1.67–2.93	**The path.** The line dives into a dark 3D world and races along an S-curve of chunky lesson nodes, lighting each one green; it presses START (2.40) and a phone rises out of the node.
S3	2.93–4.80	**Lesson.** "Translate this sentence": Duo says "Quiero un café, por favor." The camera pushes in; five word tiles lift into 3D and snap into the answer. CHECK. "Excellent!" with the Duolingo correct chime (4.23), the progress bar fills with the line's light.
S4	4.80–7.20	**Streak.** The light leaps out, curls into a flame and ignites (5.00, the one anamorphic streak). Counter 1 → **365 day streak** in fixed digit cells (6.13), the week row fills.
S5	7.20–9.33	**League.** Drop (7.20): a Diamond League card. Your row lifts out in 3D and climbs over the others from #7 to **#1** (8.70), the correct chime again.
S6	9.33–11.40	**Talk.** A floating video call: Duo talks ("¡Hola! ¿Qué tal tu día?"), your answer is the line turned into a voice wave ("¡Muy bien! Pedí un café en español.").
S7	11.40–14.67	**Every skill.** A fast pull-back: the path splits into four glowing branches. Each course node lights on its spoken word: Languages (8 flag tiles orbit, 11.67), Math (12.42), Music (12.98), Chess (13.70, the knight hops).

	Seconds	What happens
S8	14.67–16.50	**Type.** The four lines converge into one: "One path," / "every skill." with the line as the baseline, splitting into the four course colours and merging back.
S9	16.50–19.20	**Hero.** A breath, then Duo drops in and lands ON the hit (16.80); the line reveals the wordmark again. "Duolingo." (17.33), then the lesson-complete fanfare and a happy wing-flap.
S10	19.20–21.20	End card: [your signature].

VOICE-OVER
ElevenLabs, a bright, upbeat young female creator voice. The whole script as **one flowing read**, natural speed, 2 takes; keep the word-perfect one and cut it only at its own pauses:
"Five minutes a day, that's all it takes. One word at a time, a streak you'll want to keep alive, a league you'll want to win, and then, one day... you just talk. Languages, math, music... even chess. One path, every skill. Duolingo."
Anchors: 0.50 · "One word" 2.95 · "a streak" 4.60 · "and then" 9.05 · "Languages" 11.67 · "One path" 14.93 · "Duolingo." 17.33.

MUSIC
Original, made in code: bright, modern, premium (never kiddy), 100 BPM in D major. Marimba and mallet plucks, felt keys and a round sub from frame 0; kick, claps and shaker from the drop (7.20); a lift on the fork; a breath (16.50) with only a reversed swell; a full chord and a low hit on 16.80, ringing under the end card.

SOUND
About 100 cues from [your SFX library], every visible move has a sound. Plus **the brand's own app sounds as hero cues**: the correct-answer chime (4.23, 8.70) and the lesson-complete fanfare as the sonic button (18.07); the music dips under them and the voice leaves them room. Mix: voice about –16 LUFS, music ≥ 12 dB under every word, master –14 LUFS / –1.25 dBTP.

BRAND
The official wordmark (Feather Green on the dark stage), untouched and pixel-exact at rest, its clear space kept empty. Duo from the official vector art, animated only by moving his own parts (squash and stretch, blink, wings, beak), never redrawn or recoloured. The app UI is rebuilt by eye with fictional names and XP; the call is a stylised call with Duo. The brand's sounds and art are for spec use only.

PROCESS
1. Brief with frame-exact timings. 2. Voice first, then lock the picture hits to its words. 3. One camera path through a 3D world, every station a flat face with a home pose that maps 1:1 onto the screen. 4. Duo + type, UI, world and sound in parallel, the line drawn by ONE shared function. 5. Preview, a frame-by-frame motion check, one fix round. 6. The 9:16 re-layout and, on request, a layered Resolve project.

What made the difference

- **A hook that lands big.** Duo slams at almost twice his logo size, then the camera settles onto the lock-up.
- **The brand's own sounds.** The correct chime and the lesson-complete fanfare make it Duolingo before you read a word.
- **One flowing voice-over.** Short lines spread across the picture sound robotic: one take that fills the film, cut only at its pauses, and the picture follows the words.
- **A voice that fits the brand.** Playful brand, upbeat young read: audition 2-3 voices on the same script first.
- **A real character from real parts.** Duo moves with his official vector pieces, never redrawn; check every move frame by frame before anyone sees it.